
NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caltrans and Fish and Wildlife Urge Motorists to Be Alert During Watch Out for Wildlife Week

SACRAMENTO – Caltrans and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) remind motorists to remain alert for wildlife near roadways during Watch Out for Wildlife Week, which runs September 14-20.

“Motorists need to be alert when traveling through wildlife areas,” said Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty. “This will protect the public and animals, while helping reduce tragedies.”

[Defenders of Wildlife](#), a national nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting native species and their natural communities, reports more than 200 people are killed nationally in collisions with deer, elk and other large mammals each year and estimates 1.5 million animals are hit each year.

The Watch Out for Wildlife campaign is supported by Caltrans, CDFW, Defenders of Wildlife and the Road Ecology Center at the University of California, Davis.

“Drivers may see more animals crossing roads and highways this year, as they need to travel farther than usual to find adequate food and water,” said Marc Kenyon, CDFW’s Human-Wildlife Conflict Manager. “This is just one of many reasons to give driving our complete attention when we’re on the road. Only drivers can prevent collisions with animals, by being careful and paying attention.”

Caltrans, CDFW and Defenders of Wildlife offer a few tips for motorists:

- Be especially alert when driving in areas frequented by wildlife, and reduce your speed so you can react safely.
- Pay particular attention when driving during the morning and evening, as wildlife are most active during these times.
- If you see an animal cross the road, know that another may be following.
- Don’t litter. The odors may entice animals to venture near roadways.

Here are a few examples of what Caltrans, CDFW and their partners are doing to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions and improve ecological sustainability:

Highway 101, Los Angeles County

Caltrans is currently in the process of partnering to develop a project that will provide a dedicated wildlife passage across Highway 101 near Liberty Canyon Road in Agoura Hills. The proposed



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structure would traverse an eight-lane freeway and connect the Santa Monica Mountains and the Simi Hills, helping to protect the genetic integrity of wildlife in both areas.

Highway 89, Sierra County

Caltrans proposes to construct two wildlife undercrossings and accompanying directional fencing on Highway 89 in Sierra County. This section of highway was identified as a high priority during a wildlife corridor analysis, and data shows that it is within the migratory routes of deer and other wildlife.

Highway 193, Placer County

Caltrans will be starting construction on a mile-long curve correction project on rural Highway 193 in Placer County between Lincoln and Newcastle, including a wildlife undercrossing in the project design.

Highway 246, Santa Barbara County

Highway undercrossings have been designed to facilitate California tiger salamander passage between breeding ponds and upland habitat on opposite sides of Highway 246. Six undercrossings are proposed and will consist of 8-foot corrugated metal culverts spaced approximately 150 feet apart. The California tiger salamander is listed under both the state and federal Endangered Species Acts. In addition to the design and implementation of these six undercrossings, Caltrans has proposed a five-year study to assess their efficacy.

Highway 118 Culverts Project, Ventura County

The proposed project includes the improvement of six undercrossings along Highway 118 which are key for wildlife movement from the Santa Susana Mountains to Las Posas Valley. It also will add rip-rap ramps which allow wildlife to scale the high ledges under culverts which have proved to be barriers for wildlife crossings in the area. Other improvements will also consist of one-way gates for wildlife and fencing.

Highway 126 Wildlife Corridor Study

The study entails identifying likely pathways for wildlife to cross Highway 126 in Ventura and Los Angeles counties, determining how these pathways are negatively affected by the road and surrounding land development and developing options for mitigation of these impacts. This road is critical because it is currently one of the largest obstacles affecting the movement of wildlife between the Santa Monica Mountains to the south, and the Los Padres National Forest to the north. This linkage is one of the most important and imperiled natural connections in Southern California.

Research conducted by U.S. Geological Survey and Western Transportation Institute

Caltrans has contracted with the U.S. Geological Survey and Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University to conduct research that will provide information on the efficacy of wildlife crossings for special-status amphibians and reptiles. This work will help Caltrans practitioners select materials and designs for amphibian and reptile crossings that are durable and promote the sustainability of the transportation infrastructure, as well as ecological sustainability.

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